Fall in payroll jobs continues into August

Media Release

Released 8/09/2022

Source: Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia, Week ending 13 August 2022

Payroll jobs fell 0.8 per cent in the month to 13 August 2022, following a 0.6 per cent fall in the month to 16 July 2022, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Lauren Ford, head of labour statistics at the ABS, said: “Payroll jobs continued to fall into August, down from the recent peak at the end of June.

“The slightly lower number of payroll jobs continued to reflect the ongoing impacts of short-term employee absences from COVID-19 and other illnesses during winter, within a tight labour market.”

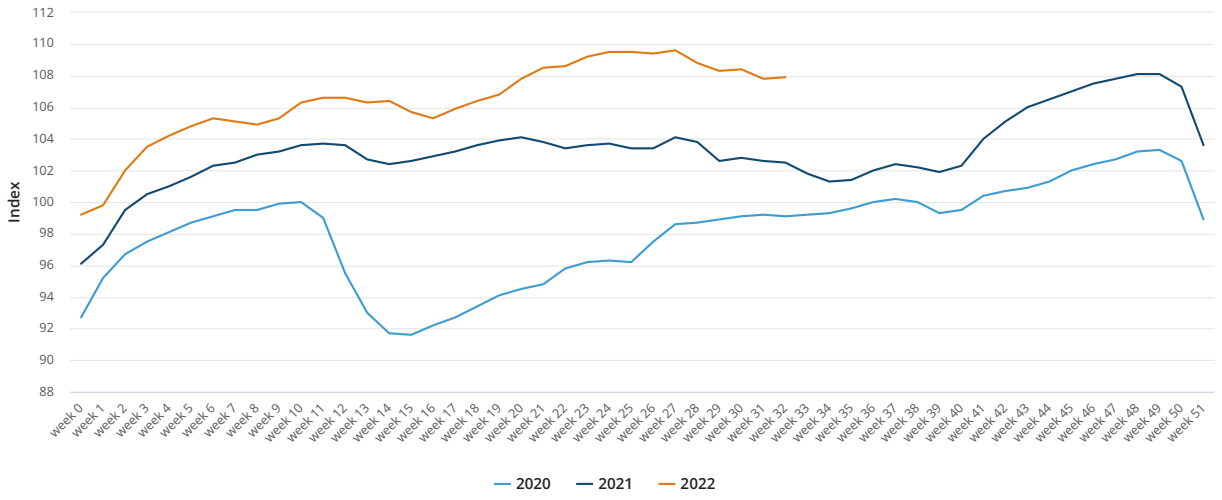
Payroll jobs can show slower growth and larger short-term changes than Labour Force statistics on employment, given employees without paid leave entitlements may be away from work for a short period without losing their job, particularly during holiday periods or when they are sick. It is also difficult to interpret changes in payroll jobs and wages around the end of the financial year, because employers' reporting patterns change around this time.

Changes over time

The recent employee absences continue a series of pandemic-related disruptions in the labour market during the second half of winter, making it difficult to compare across years.

“In 2022, there were high numbers of employee absences during winter from COVID-19 and other illnesses. This time last year the data reflected the emergence of the COVID-19 Delta variant, while in 2020 the labour market was still recovering from the initial pandemic outbreak with second wave impacts in Victoria,” Ms Ford said.

Payroll jobs indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020 (week 10 in 2020)



Week 0 represents the week ending 4 January 2020, 2 January 2021 and 1 January 2022. Week 32 represents the week ending 15 August 2020, 14 August 2021 and 13 August 2022.

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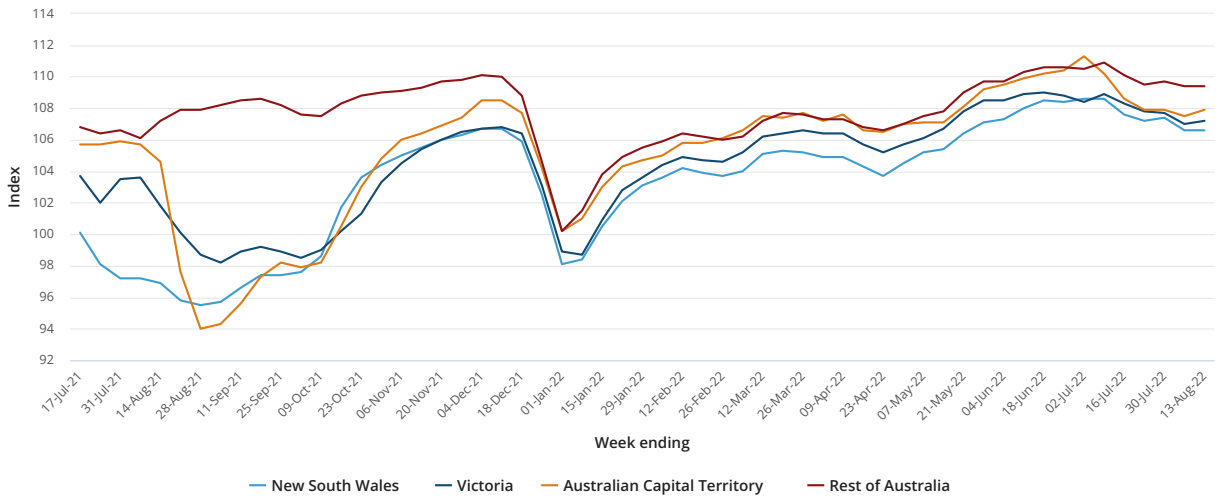
Payroll jobs, by selected state and territory



Indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020.

States and territories

“Payroll jobs fell in most states and territories in the month to mid-August 2022, with the largest falls in Victoria and New South Wales (both down 1.0 per cent),” Ms Ford said.

Western Australia and the Northern Territory were the only jurisdictions without a fall in payroll jobs over the month (both unchanged at 0.0 per cent), which was largely due to rises in the Education and training industry (as school resumed) offsetting payroll job falls in other industries.

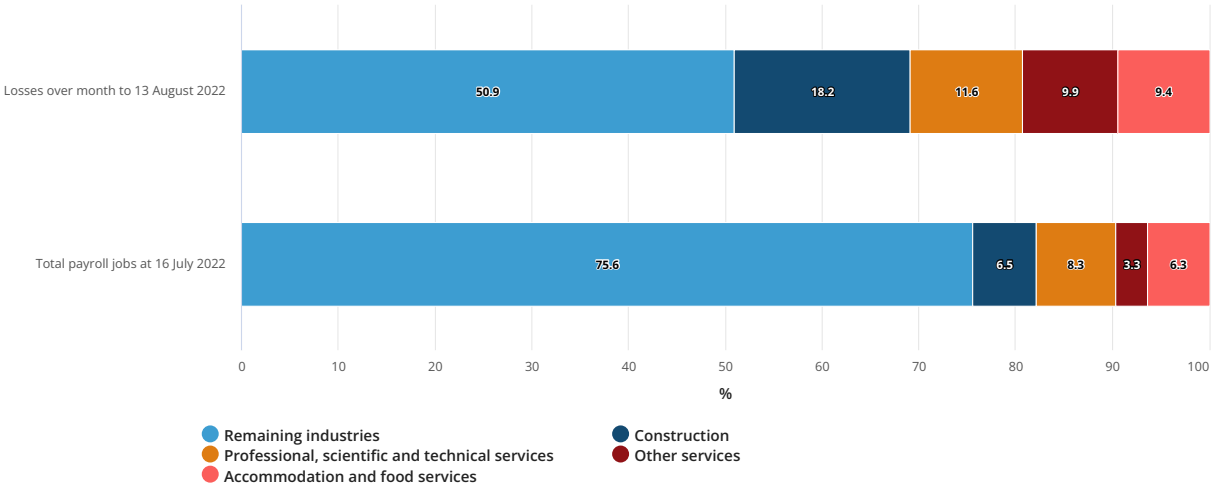
Industries

In the month to mid-August 2022, payroll jobs fell in all industries except for Education and training, which rose 2.3 per cent.

The industries with the largest share of the fall in payroll jobs were Construction and Professional, scientific and technical services which held an 18.2 per cent and 11.6 per cent

share of payroll jobs losses in the month to mid-August 2022.

Share of payroll jobs, by selected industry



Payroll job losses exclude the Education and training industry, as jobs increased in the month to mid-August 2022.

This is the fiftieth release of Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia since its first release in April 2020.

The ABS acknowledges the continued support of the Australian Taxation Office in enabling the ABS to produce weekly insights into the Australian labour market from Single Touch Payroll data.

Media notes

- Due to increased variability in Single Touch Payroll reporting around the end of the financial year (particularly for wages data), the ABS did not publish wages indexes in

the previous release. Wages indexes have been reinstated in this release.

- Payroll jobs are not seasonally adjusted, which generally requires at least three years of data. The longstanding seasonally adjusted Labour Force statistics series can aid in the interpretation of labour statistics across periods of greater seasonality, through the COVID-19 period.
- Payroll jobs are predominantly employee jobs paid through payrolls. Some industries, such as Agriculture, forestry and fishing and Construction, have high proportions of owner managers who are not included in payroll reporting. For more information, see the Scope and coverage section of the Methodology (/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-13-august-2022#how-data-are-collected) of this release.
- In each release, as more complete data are received, payroll jobs and wages estimates are revised. The magnitude of revisions can vary at some points of the year, such as the end of the financial year and calendar year in line with changes in the reporting activity of businesses.
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